

Veterinary Medical Board

Registered Veterinary Technician Committee



STRATEGIC PLAN

2003

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Mission

The mission of the Veterinary Medical Board (VMB) is to protect consumers and animals through proper licensing of veterinarians and registered veterinary technicians, and through vigorous, objective enforcement of the California Veterinary Medicine Practice Act.

Vision

The vision of the Veterinary Medical Board is to ensure:

- Consumers and licensees are educated about their rights and responsibilities.
- Disputes are resolved for consumers and licensees promptly and impartially.
- Violations of law are investigated and adjudicated promptly.
- Qualified applicants demonstrate competency through validated testing.
- Performance measures are valid and current.
- Licensees maintain professional competency throughout their careers.
- The licensing process is efficient and equitable.

Introduction

The 2003 Strategic Plan includes the Veterinary Medical Board's mission and vision statements, a list of seven goals and a detailed analysis of the objectives for each goal.

The VMB is pro-active in strategic planning and is developing performance measures for its many varied tasks. Through these strategic planning efforts, the VMB looks beyond its mandated, on-going services to provide the best consumer and animal protection possible. The VMB reviews its plan annually to evaluate progress and to ensure that objectives and performance measures are met.

Goals

The Veterinary Medical Board identified the following goals to make specific its mission and vision:

1. Promote consumer education programs.
2. Maintain an enforcement program to protect consumers and animals.
3. Establish minimum standards of practice.
4. Establish educational standards for licensure.
5. Administer examinations that are job related and measure minimum competency.
6. Maintain resources and administrative procedures to enable the VMB to carry out its mandates efficiently and effectively.
7. Communicate to licensees their responsibilities and rights under the Veterinary Medicine Practice Act.

Program Overview

In accordance with its mission, vision, goals, and objectives, the VMB provides the following on-going services:

Enforcement

The enforcement staff handles complaints against licensed veterinarians, registered veterinary technicians (RVTs), veterinary facilities, and RVT schools. It investigates allegations of fraud, deception, negligence and incompetence against licensees and allegations of practice without a license by lay persons. The VMB conducts veterinary facility inspections to ensure cleanliness, proper storage and handling of pharmaceuticals, and compliance with minimum standards of practice.

Examinations/Licensing and Registration

The examination staff processes initial applications for licensure, administers and oversees licensing examinations, processes premise registration permits, oversees a biennial birth-date renewal program, processes license verification requests and address changes and utilizes computer technology to enhance the examination process and expedite score notification.

Administration

Administrative services include budget preparation and projecting, legislative and regulatory activities, personnel, cashiering, publishing a quarterly newsletter and consumer brochures, evaluating consumer and licensing performance evaluation surveys, analytical support tasks, and resource management (i.e., personnel, space, storage, and equipment). The VMB responds to inquiries from both members of the public and governmental entities and works closely with the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) on legislation, data processing, examination scoring and automated cashiering.

Goals and Objectives

1. Promote consumer education programs.

Objectives:

- Develop logo and marketing capabilities for consumer outreach. **June 2003**
- Identify and quantify practice types geographically. **June 2003**
- Recommend that veterinarians post a sign in the veterinary hospital with Board's number for complaints. **November 2002**
- Explore feasibility and costs of magazine and public service advertisements and outsourcing of printing consumer brochure to advertising sponsors. **June 2003**

2. Maintain an enforcement program to protect consumers and animals.

Objectives:

- Identify specific processing times in complaint review system and explore processing alternatives. **July 2003**
- Develop complaint-profiling system to track multiple respondents/consulting veterinarians, increased workload and complaint types. **July 2002**
- Develop system to identify unlicensed premises and explore the need for mandatory reporting of unlicensed premises. **July 2003**
- Study the feasibility of implementing a code of conduct for licensees and permit holders. **June 2005**
- Quantify the impact of consumer outreach programs on enforcement program. **June 2004**
- Study and explore the balance between client interest and animal welfare. **July 2005**
- Study methods to ensure probationary compliance. **July 2002**

3. Establish minimum standards of practice.

Objectives:

- Determine necessity for equine minimum standards of practice. **December 2004**
- Determine necessity for food animal minimum standards of practice. **December 2004**

4. Establish educational standards for licensure.

Objectives:

- Study the effect of Mandatory Continuing Education (MCE) on consumer complaints of practitioner incompetence. **June 2005**

5. Administer examinations that are job related and measure minimum competency.

Objectives:

- Maintain representation on the National Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (NBVME). **July 2003**
- Send VMB Examination Committee members to forums on licensing examinations. **Ongoing**

6. Maintain resources and administrative procedures to enable the VMB to carry out its mandates efficiently and effectively.

Objectives:

- Develop an ongoing system for the evaluation of program effectiveness. **Ongoing**
- Prepare budget change proposal to hire one additional administrative analyst to handle specific special projects, i.e., web site development and maintenance, newsletter and consumer brochure development and dissemination, sunset review updates, and special communication projects to improve consumer outreach efforts. **June 2003**
- Provide larger, more professional initial wall licenses. **October 2004**
- Maintain representation on American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB). **Ongoing**

Completed Objectives-2002

1. Promote consumer education programs.
2. Maintain an enforcement program to protect consumers and animals.
 - Reviewed and updated the Disciplinary Guidelines.
 - Implemented the inspection of new premises within the first six months of registration.
3. Establish minimum standards of practice.
 - Educated practitioners on minimum standards of practice.
 - Informed practitioners of the need for premise registration for ambulatory practice (i.e. mobile veterinary services).
4. Establish educational standards for licensure.
5. Administer examinations that are job related and measure minimum competency.
 - Maintained representation on the National Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (NBVME).
6. Maintain resources and administrative procedures to enable VMB to carry out its mandates efficiently and effectively.
 - Maintained representation on American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB).

Completed Objectives-2001

1. Promote consumer education programs.
 - Developed a consumer page on the VMB website and included links to other entities to assist anyone seeking information on the veterinary health profession. Prepared bullet pieces, information sheets, and position papers for consumers and licensees to address frequently asked questions. Included all of this information on the website, in the newsletter, and in brochures.
 - Developed consumer brochures and distribute via website, newsletter and mail.
 - Identified regional consumer events and evaluated feasibility of participating in events to expand consumer outreach efforts, including, but not limited to: attendance at consumer events such as state fair, Pet Expo, Los Angeles county fair.
 - Identified ways to promote the Board's new public toll-free number.
2. Maintained an enforcement program to protect consumers and animals.
3. Established minimum standards of practice.
4. Establish educational standards for licensure.
 - Implemented a Mandatory Continuing Education (MCE) program.
 - Transitioned to new foreign graduate equivalency program being administered and developed by the American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB) that incorporates an exam developed by the National Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (NBVME).
5. Administer examinations that are job related and measure minimum competency.

- Tracked temporary licensee complaints.
 - Updated the Veterinary Practice Analysis (previously referred to as Occupational Analysis).
6. Maintain resources and administrative procedures to enable VMB to carry out its mandates efficiently and effectively.
- Sought legislation for authority to collect back renewal fees.
(AB 446 signed by Governor on 9/19, effective 1/2002 [chp. 306, stats. 2001])
 - Sought legislation to give reciprocity candidates the option of taking the VLE and California curriculum to obtain full licensure.
 - Identified the need for a license fee increase for veterinary renewals.
 - Identified the need for a fee increase for premises permits (two-tiered system: one fee for initial permit to cover inspection costs and different fee for annual renewal).

Completed Objectives-2000

1. Promote consumer education programs.
 - Maintained representation on the National Board Examining Committee.
 - Updated the newsletter for style, clip art, etc.
 - Obtained a toll-free number for complaints to be received.
2. Maintain an enforcement program to protect consumers and animals.
 - Revised premise application to include new requirements and make it easier to complete.
 - Reviewed for currency the standardized consumer correspondence forms, including post cards, initial complaint letters, and notification letters.
 - Initiated a pilot project to enforce premise registration requirements in the county with the highest percentage of complaint activity.
 - Studied the feasibility of legislation to prohibit practicing veterinary medicine out of an unregistered facility.
 - Increased use of national enforcement examinations in disciplinary actions in lieu of defunct CCT.
3. Establish minimum standards of practice.
 - Completed the regulatory package for core, small animal, and mobile practices minimum standards of practice.
 - Trained staff and inspectors to administer the new standards of practice.
 - Developed outreach program to inform licensees of the change in minimum standards of practice.
4. Establish educational standards for licensure.
 - Explored issues associated with costs and backlog in the Educational Curriculum for Foreign Veterinary Graduates program.
5. Administer examinations that are job related and measure minimum competency.
 - Adopted regulations to implement a computerized delivery of the national licensing exam.
6. Maintain resources and administrative procedures to enable VMB to carry out its mandates efficiently and effectively.

- Obtained a new telephone system to enhance dissemination of consumer information and response time.
- Extracted policies from prior years' minutes as historical resource and develop a Board policy binder that includes definitions of administrative, personnel, and procedural policies, i.e., the duties of the VMB Chairperson, committee and administrative functions, examination and licensing guidelines, enforcement procedures, and develop index for easy reference. Index and classify prior years' motions and policies for permanent archives.
- Maintained representation on the American Association of Veterinary State Boards.
- Assessed the impact of an annual birth date renewal.
- Developed a newsletter article regarding inactive licenses. Inactive licenses have the same costs for renewal but will require no continuing education.

Completed Objectives-1999

1. Acquire adequate facilities and resources to enable the VMB to carry out its mandate and activities efficiently and effectively.
 - Hired one additional enforcement analyst to handle the enforcement database development and management to improve turnaround time and to handle the facility inspection program.
2. Ensure that complaints are investigated and adjudicated promptly and that all premise facilities are registered with the Board and inspected on a routine basis.
 - Refined the record keeping regulations to establish the minimum information to be contained in the animal record.
 - Adopted regulations to redefine the minimum standards for core and small animal practices and the definition of premise.
 - Developed policy to define criteria for ownership of records.
 - Reorganized the California Practice Act to a more user friendly, sequential format (used Pharmacy Board's practice act for format example).
3. Evaluate licensing standards to ensure that examinations are job-related, responsive to California needs, cost-effective, and that required qualifications are not artificial barriers.
 - Investigated the feasibility of and implemented a computer-generated examination for the California State Board. (First administration, December 2000)
 - Developed timeline for updating the veterinary and veterinary technician occupational analyses.
4. Educate and inform consumers, licensees, and other stakeholders of their rights, responsibilities, and about Board activities.
 - Increased the frequency of the newsletter to a quarterly publication.
 - Explored methods of enhancing identification of the VMB's constituency and survey for input on effectiveness and efficiency.
 - Included information in the newsletter on advertising guidelines, letters to the Board, ethics, education, consultant's corner to spotlight complaint trends, national issues, VMB goals and objectives, meeting dates/locations, incidents of unlicensed activity, etc.
 - Developed profile of newsletter topics that should be published continuously.
5. Establish internal Board protocol and procedures to ensure consistency of services and

application of Board policies through reviewing and updating statutory and regulatory programs and authority.

- Improved procedures for new Board member orientation by Board staff, including an explanation of the budget process, legislative activities, committee assignments, strategic planning, goals and objectives, etc.
- Developed procedures for new staff orientation.
- Increased interaction with DCA, Department of Finance and other agencies and educate Board/staff members to demystify the budget process, e.g., budget change proposals (BCPs), deficiency augmentation, etc.

Completed Objectives –1998

1. Acquire adequate facilities and resources to enable the VMB to carry out its mandate and activities efficiently and effectively.
 - Obtained additional space to house staff, maintain confidential files, and conduct confidential enforcement conferences.
 - Upgraded computer equipment to improve staff efficiency and to utilize the Internet for increased consumer access to information and services.
 - Identified staff and VMB member training needs and set up annual schedule.
 - Implemented the use of software compatible with DCA to enhance information exchange.
 - Implemented methods to increase consumer information access via use of new web site.
2. Ensure that complaints are investigated and adjudicated promptly and that all premise facilities are registered with the Board and inspected on a routine basis.
 - Increased enforcement consultant time to improve enforcement procedures and reduce turnaround time.
 - Improved enforcement functions by providing additional training workshops for expert witnesses, facility inspectors, and complaint review committee members.
 - Evaluated citation and fine program and possible statutory changes.
 - Evaluated complaint/case-processing procedures to minimize turnaround time.
 - Increased interaction between staff and enforcement agencies; i.e., DCA's Division of Investigation (DoI), Attorney General (AG), and Administrative Law Judges (ALJs).
 - Explored alternatives to Request for Proposal (RFP) process for hospital inspection program and consultant positions.
 - Promulgated regulations to update and refine RVT private school inspection criteria.
3. Evaluate licensing standards to ensure that examinations are job-related, responsive to California needs, cost-effective, and that required qualifications are not artificial barriers.
 - Maintained VMB member representation on national level, e.g., NBEC, and AAVSB.
 - Revised CSB format by December 1998.
 - Developed an examination template by June 1997 for minimum questions necessary to maintain validity, i.e., percentage of small and food animal and equine questions.
 - Implemented equating scoring method by April 1998.
 - Projected VMB member and staff time required to implement CSB format.
 - Endorsed computerization of national exams.
 - Used species-specific disciplinary exam endorsed by the AAVSB.
 - Improved enforcement functions by conducting separate training workshops for expert witnesses, facility inspectors, and complaint review committee members.

- Developed training manual for experts and Complaint Review Committee members.
 - Prepared annual update of sunset reports/statistics.
 - Implemented statistically defensible method of setting exam pass points (referred to as equating).
4. Educate and inform consumers, licensees, and other stakeholders of their rights, responsibilities, and about Board activities.
- Updated one page Fact Sheet on VMB statistics with current information.
 - Used web site to advise consumers on problem areas of which they should be aware and to highlight advantages of certain procedures, i.e., written estimates for veterinary care, and veterinary referral programs.
5. Establish internal Board protocol and procedures to ensure consistency of services and application of Board policies through reviewing and updating statutory and regulatory programs and authority.
- Developed quarterly Board meeting schedule and site arrangements with provisions for annual review of strategic plan.
 - Increased utilization of Board committees for research purposes including public participation.
 - Referred proposed statutory and regulatory changes to Legislative Committee for investigation and discussion prior to submitting to full Board.
 - Updated records of staff changes, i.e., organizational chart.
 - Reviewed mailing lists for updating or expansion.
 - Included newsletter articles on web site.

Completed Objectives-1997

1. Educate and inform consumers, licensees, and other stakeholders of their rights, responsibilities, and about Board activities.
- Published a brochure regarding consumer rights and responsibilities.
 - Included educational materials in hospital inspection procedures.
 - Implemented telephonic and fax complaint intake procedures.
2. Ensure that complaints are investigated and adjudicated promptly and that all premise facilities are registered with the Board and inspected on a routine basis.
- Increased enforcement staff.
 - Assigned a Board consultant to work with investigators on enforcement cases.
3. Evaluate licensing standards to ensure that examinations are job-related, responsive to California needs, cost-effective, and that required qualifications are not artificial barriers.
- Implemented more effective test production and statistical retrieval in the item banking system.
 - Worked at a national level to develop computer technology for the national.

Registered Veterinary Technician Committee

STRATEGIC PLAN

Goals and Objectives

2003

Goals and Objectives

1. Promote consumer education programs.

Objectives:

- Raise consumer awareness by adding "what is RVTC" and "who to call" to website. **October 2002**
- Educate professionals (licensees/registrants) as to how/when to file a complaint against another professional by coordinating with consumer education efforts. **July 2003**
- Explore feasibility of public service announcements throughout CA. **June 2004**

2. Maintain an enforcement program to protect consumers and animals.

Objectives:

- Initiate a pilot program to identify enforcement issues with RVTs and unlicensed assistants. **June 2003**
- Implement California Approved School regulations. **October 2003**
- Add to hospital inspector criteria to check RVT job tasks for unlicensed activity. **January 2005**

3. Establish education standards for licensure.

Objectives:

- Re-visit alternate-route requirement and evaluate effectiveness. **June 2004**

4. Administer examinations that are job-related and measure minimum competency.

Objectives:

- Assess current job tasks via questionnaires to RVTs /public hearing.
- Upon review of the occupational analysis, review examination for content and validity. **December 2002**

5. Maintain resources and administrative procedures to enable VMB to carry out its mandates efficiently and effectively.

Objectives:

- Explore feasibility of adding RVT member to VMB committees. **April 2005**

Completed Objectives-2002

1. Developed on-going plan for informational series in newsletter, website, and brochure defining RVT and unregistered assistant task responsibilities.
2. Initiated education program for professionals (licensees/registrants) on how and when to file a complaint by coordinating with consumer education efforts.
3. Revised California Approved School regulations.
4. Explored feasibility of adding RVTC members to VMB legislative committee.
5. Explored feasibility of adding RVTC liaison member to VMB committees.

Completed Objectives-2001

1. Raised consumer awareness of RVT tasks and responsibilities by adding a consumer page to the website and by statewide public service announcements.
2. Developed newsletter and website RVT cite and fine authority articles.
3. Added RVT job tasks to website.
4. Assessed current job tasks by gathering data via occupational analysis.
5. Explored regulatory amendments to require radiation safety training for unregistered assistants.
6. Developed outline of requirements for converting to computer testing by working with OER and assessing VMB computer testing program.
7. Assessed current job tasks by gathering data via occupational analysis.
8. Surveyed RVTs via questionnaires.

Completed Objectives-2000

1. Raised consumer awareness by:
 - Developing brochures (The Veterinary Health Care Team)
2. Initiated assessment of current job tasks by gathering data via occupational analysis; surveying RVTs via questionnaires/public hearings by January 2001.
3. Developed questionnaire to identify RVT and unregistered assistant job tasks.
4. Assessed RVT school inspection criteria for effectiveness.

5. Reviewed annual reports from RVT schools.
6. Improved communication between RVTC and VMB by establishing a joint meeting with VMB and RVTC on an (at least) annual basis (first meeting March 2000).
7. Established committee meeting schedule to enhance open communication with VMB.
8. Explored feasibility of adding RVTC member to VMB legislative committee.